



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **INS Formally Opens New Sub-office in Inland Empire** *Facility Centralizes Agency's Services in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties*

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. 3/4 At a ribbon-cutting this morning attended by Congressman Jerry Lewis (R-San Bernardino) and a host of federal and local leaders, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) formally marked the opening of the its new full-service sub-office in San Bernardino. During the ceremony, INS Western Regional Director Johnny Williams presented the INS San Bernardino staff with an American flag recently flown over Ellis Island, the New York landmark that served as a gateway for millions of immigrants from the 1800's to the 1950's.

The new sub-office will administer INS programs for residents of San Bernardino and Riverside counties, and will also house the Information Office, formerly located in Riverside. The sub-office, which opened in September, provides the public with general information on adjustment of status, citizenship, and other INS benefits and services. The new office also processes advance parole and employment authorization applications and houses an enforcement division responsible for investigating immigration-related crimes ranging from document fraud to migrant smuggling.

"This office is a tremendous asset for the growing immigrant community here in the Inland Empire and for the INS," said INS Los Angeles District Director Thomas J. Schiltgen. "Today's ceremony marks another major step forward in our ongoing effort to move a greater share of our operations out of downtown Los Angeles and bring them closer to the communities we serve."

The San Bernardino Sub-office is located at 655 W. Rialto, in the city of San Bernardino. Currently, the office is open to the public Monday through Friday from 8:00 – 3:00 p.m., but that time frame will be expanded once the office fully staffed.

"Many people in our community have been anxiously awaiting this move," said Irene Martin, Officer-in-Charge of the San Bernardino Sub-office. "This facility was designed specifically with the needs of our customers in mind and will enable us to provide the best service possible."

The San Bernardino Sub-office occupies the majority of a 60,000 square foot building. The primary waiting room seats close to 200 people and offers a children's play area equipped with a TV/VCR, toys, and books. When fully staffed, the Sub-office will have approximately 30 officers available to conduct interviews and process applications for adjustment of status and citizenship.

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